



Miami-Dade Legislative Item

File Number: 150177

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 File Name: S, FL WATER MGNT DISTRICT BISCAYNE BAY SURFACE WATER QUALITY Introduced: 1/27/2015
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 Agenda Date: 2/3/2015 Agenda Item Number: 11A33

Notes: Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO RESTORE FUNDING FOR THE BISCAYNE BAY SURFACE WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S DEPARTMENT OF REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES, DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Indexes: LEGISLATURE Sponsors: Daniella Levine Cava, Prime Sponsor
 Sally A. Heyman, Co-Sponsor

Sunset Provision: No Effective Date: Expiration Date:
 Registered Lobbyist: None Listed

Legislative History

| Acting Body | Date | Agenda Item | Action | Sent To | Due Date | Returned | Pass/Fail |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| County Attorney | 1/27/2015 | | Assigned | Annery Pulgar Alfonso | | | |

Legislative Text

TITLE

RESOLUTION URGING THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO RESTORE FUNDING FOR THE BISCAYNE BAY SURFACE WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S DEPARTMENT OF REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES, DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

BODY

WHEREAS, the quality of life in Miami-Dade County is dependent on clean water that will support and sustain our

community's needs, as well as the needs of our environment and economy; and

WHEREAS, compared to other Florida waters, Biscayne Bay is characterized by low concentrations of nutrients and pollutants, and has excellent water clarity that supports robust seagrass meadows, economically-vital fisheries, ecologically-critical habitats such as coral and mangrove communities, and provides recreational opportunities for residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Biscayne Bay recreational activities are an important part of Miami-Dade County's economy, contributing approximately \$3.8 billion in economic output, \$2.1 billion in income, and 57,000 jobs in 2004, as reported in the 2005 "Biscayne Bay Economic Study," prepared by Hazen and Sawyer Environmental Engineers and Scientists ("Hazen and Sawyer"); and

WHEREAS, according to Hazen and Sawyer, the overall economic activities associated with Biscayne Bay-related uses contributed approximately 10.2 percent of the total Miami-Dade County income in 2004, a significant increase from 7.0 percent in 1980, which represented approximately \$12.7 billion in economic output, \$6.3 billion in income, 138,000 jobs, and \$627 million in tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, Biscayne Bay-related activities have also had a positive impact on the southeast Florida economy as a whole, contributing approximately 4 percent of the total income earned in southeast Florida in 2004, up from 3.5 percent in 1980; and

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County's Regulatory and Economic Resources Department (RER), Division of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) regularly monitors surface water quality throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, water quality samples are normally collected at 87 locations along Biscayne Bay, as well as at major drainage canals and tributaries leading to Biscayne Bay; and

WHEREAS, the importance of surface water quality and its present overall condition was recognized by the state, when it designated the surface waters of Biscayne Bay an Outstanding Florida Water, a designation that provides for the highest levels of protection to assist in maintaining the quality of Biscayne Bay's waters; and

WHEREAS, data collected by the County indicates that open water sites in Biscayne Bay and other tidal waters meet or exceed federal, state and local standards for recreational use and support of healthy fish and wildlife populations; and

WHEREAS, there are portions of Biscayne Bay, canals, and rivers, however, where the water quality and supported habitats are exhibiting signs of human impact; and

WHEREAS, portions of a number of canals in Miami-Dade County's urbanized areas do not meet one or more water quality criteria and are designated by the state as "impaired"; and

WHEREAS, the most common problem is an excess of certain types of bacteria that are indicators of sewage contamination, and some portions of Biscayne Bay are affected by excess nutrients, which may lead to algal blooms that reduce water clarity, damage seagrass and reduce the ecological health of Biscayne Bay; and

WHEREAS, according to DERM, events that have occurred during the past 10 years indicate that Biscayne Bay is reaching a tipping point in being able to withstand human-based and natural disturbances; and

WHEREAS, DERM's surface water quality monitoring, working in conjunction with seagrass monitoring, has contributed to understanding the changes in these communities and better enables Miami-Dade County to continue implementing many programs that work together to protect and improve the quality of our surface waters; and

WHEREAS, while there are multiple efforts underway to improve the quality of waters discharging to Biscayne Bay, it is extremely important that we continue to assess the water quality and habitats of Biscayne Bay; and

WHEREAS, for more than two decades, the South Florida Water Management District has contracted with the County to provide funding for Biscayne Bay water quality monitoring; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the South Florida Water Management District provided approximately \$243,435.00 in funding for the Biscayne Bay Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program administered by DERM; and

WHEREAS, as of October 2014, the South Florida Water Management District terminated the funding for the Biscayne Bay Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program, resulting in the discontinuance of 20 sampling stations in Biscayne Bay, representing a 47 percent loss of Biscayne Bay's open-water monitoring network; and

WHEREAS, DERM's inability to collect data from those 20 sampling points represents a significant loss in its capability to detect changes in water quality and in the overall health of Biscayne Bay; and

WHEREAS, the ecological health of Biscayne Bay has a great impact on the environment and economy of Miami-Dade County, which benefits this region and state; and

WHEREAS, with respect to the ecology and environment of South Florida, the Biscayne Bay Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program should be one of the top funding priorities for the South Florida Water Management District,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Urges the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District to restore funding for the Biscayne Bay Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program administered by Miami-Dade County's Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, Division of Environmental Resources Management.

Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, and the Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District.

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